

2. Parsing Hybridity: Archaeologies of Amalgamation in Seventeenth-Century New Mexico

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Abstract: In recent years, archaeologists have used the term *hybridity* with increasing frequency to describe and interpret amalgamated forms of material culture. But do postcolonial notions of hybridity (*sensu* Bhabha 1994; Hall 1990; Young 1995) differ in any meaningful ways from models of cultural mixture traditionally employed by anthropologists, such as syncretism, creolization, and acculturation? Or is this simply a matter of semantics, citation practices, and the adoption of trendy anthropological jargon by archaeologists? In this chapter, I consider the meanings associated with the concept of hybridity, exploring what this term offers for the archaeological interpretation of colonial encounters. In doing so, I compare and contrast hybridity with acculturation, syncretism, bricolage, creolization, and *mestizaje* in order to identify the subtly differing connotations of these concepts, as well as highlighting the contributions that postcolonial notions of hybridity offer for contemporary archaeology through a case study from the seventeenth-century Pueblos of the American Southwest.

Mélange, hotch-potch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world*.

—Salman Rushdie, *In Good Faith* (1990:4)

Shortly after establishing permanent settlements in the Americas, Spanish colonial societies began to be faced with a multitude of new people and things that did not fit neatly into preconceived binary categories of “Old World” and “New World.” The mixing of Europeans and Americans that occurred after 1492 resulted in a wealth of new cultural practices, objects, and (most problematically)

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individuals, all of which required novel classificatory schemes. In an attempt to make order out of the messy and complex realities of the colonial encounter, the residents of New Spain created an intricate system of classification that labeled persons according to their *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood), based on the perceived biological identities of their parents. Offspring resulting from the union of a “pure-blooded” Spaniard and a Native American were labeled *mestizos*, those from an African and an Indian parent were called *lobos*, the union of a mestizo and a Native American begat a *coyote*, and so on. Scores of different categories were created between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in an attempt to sort out the new racial admixtures that fell into the ambiguous interstices between colonizer and colonized (Dean and Leibsohn 2003:9). Further distinctions were made between Spaniards born in the Old World, known as *peninsulares*, and those born in the Americas, labeled *criollos* (Deagan 1983; Ewen 2000; Loren 2007:23).

Just as the populace of colonial New Spain invented numerous labels in an attempt to come to grips with racial and ethnic admixture, so too have anthropologists coined a plethora of terms in the investigation of cultural amalgamation resulting from culture contact and colonization. Assimilation, acculturation, syncretism, bricolage, *mestizaje*, miscegenation, transculturation, and creolization are all concepts that have been employed by anthropologists over the past century to describe processes of cultural melding. In recent years, the term *hybridity* has been added to this list, inspired in large part by the writings of postcolonial scholars such as Homi Bhabha (1994), Stuart Hall (1990), and Robert Young (1995). Increasingly, archaeologists are using many of these terms interchangeably. But if acculturation, syncretism, creolization, and all the rest are deployed merely as synonyms to describe the same general process of intercultural amalgamation, the addition of yet another term to the list hardly contributes to an improved understanding of cultural change and exchange (van Dommelen 1997:309). So does *hybridity* describe or interpret blended cultural formations in any way that is significantly different from these previous models of cultural mixture? Or is its increasing popularity simply a matter of semantics, citation practices, and the adoption of trendy anthropological jargon by archaeologists?

While all the aforementioned terms describe processes associated with cultural intermixture, each also has its own distinct etymology, and all were coined to describe subtly different situations in which signs and forms with differing histories were recombined (often in colonial settings). Although archaeologists employing these terms may be akin to the proverbial blind men feeling different parts of the same elephant, I think that there is some utility in identifying the differences between the trunk and the tail of the beast that is cultural mixture. In what follows I consider the meanings of the concept of hybridity, exploring what this term brings to the table regarding the archaeological interpretation of colonial encounters. I compare and contrast hybridity with some of the alternative terms that are commonly utilized in archaeology (and are frequently treated as synonyms): acculturation, syncretism, bricolage, creolization, and *mestizaje*. In so doing, I hope to identify the commonly accepted meanings and subtle, differing connotations of these concepts, as well as to highlight the contributions that postcolonial notions of hybridity might bring to the study of material culture.

Definitions and Debates

At the most basic level, this discussion concerns how new things come into being. There are three primary means by which this process occurs: invention, divergence, or convergence. The first of these, invention, describes the creation of wholly original objects, styles, and technologies, whereby something is created anew from whole cloth. This process is probably the most rare of the three, with Edison's invention of the lightbulb being a consummate example. More frequently, new things come into being through divergence (commonly termed *evolution*), whereby changes to an existing form through time result in the eventual creation of multiple separate types through splitting or branching. This process has been a major focus of archaeological research throughout the history of the discipline, the evolution of stone tools being the quintessential example. But this volume takes as its focus the third way in which new things enter the world: the combination or convergence of two or more existing forms to create something different. Although this process has historically received less attention from archaeologists than evolution/divergence, it is probably the most common of the three types. In recent years the term *hybridity* (or *hybridization*) has served as shorthand for this process, joining the plethora of other words that archaeologists have used over the past century to characterize "creation through recombination."

The concept of acculturation has the longest and possibly most controversial history of the aforementioned terms (Cusick 1998:127–132). In its early anthropological use, *acculturation* was defined as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original patterns of either or both groups" (Redfield et al. 1936:149). Although this original definition called for a neutral study of cultural contact and change, over time acculturation came to be closely associated with the loss of "traditional" (non-Western) cultural formations and the subsequent adoption of Euro-American technologies, values, and ways of life. Archaeological studies of acculturation have tended toward trait lists that attempted to measure the degree of acculturation in a social group through the amount of foreign (usually European) artifacts in indigenous assemblages (e.g., Quimby and Spoehr 1951; see Saunders 1998:417–418). In recent years, acculturation has fallen out of favor in archaeology due to its perceived association with unidirectional culture change and the subsequent lack of agency that such studies have typically allotted to subalterns (Armstrong 1998:379). In practice, the concept of acculturation has played a role in the "Othering" of non-Western peoples (Said 1978), reducing colonized groups to simple, passive, subordinate, and receptive consumers of the cultural forms supplied by complex, active, dominant colonial masters who remain unchanged throughout this process (Lightfoot 1995:206; see Kroeber 1948:425–434). Furthermore, acculturation studies have typically omitted overt discussions of power relations (Howson 1990:84) and have generally neglected to account for the role of resistance in mediating cultural interactions (Cusick 1998:135). Finally, acculturation has frequently been

viewed as a stage in the process of colonization that is completed when assimilation occurs. Yet this notion flies in the face of contemporary anthropological concepts, which view mixing not as a stage but as a constant and constituent element of all cultures (Sahlins 1994:389; Said 1993:xxv). For these reasons, the use of the acculturation concept has waned significantly among recent generations of anthropologists and archaeologists.

By contrast, anthropologists seem to have conflicting opinions regarding the utility of the term *syncretism* in the characterization of cultural mixture. At its broadest, syncretism describes “the combination of elements from two or more different religious traditions within a specified [cultural] frame” (Stewart 1999:58). The unique attribute of syncretism (in comparison with the other terms under consideration here) is its typical focus on religion, although it has also been widely employed in the field of ethnomusicology. While this concept seems to enjoy general acceptance among anthropologists and archaeologists working in the Americas, many Africanists (often trained in British social anthropology) have eschewed its application, growing “increasingly uncomfortable with the s-word” over the past thirty years (Stewart 1999:46). This negative assessment is based on the notion that syncretism has pejorative connotations, deriding cultural mixture as undesirable, or that it presupposes a preexisting purity, conceiving of cultures as bounded wholes (the so-called billiard ball approach to culture contact [Cusick 1998:131]). For better or worse, studies of syncretism among colonized subalterns have heretofore far outnumbered studies of this phenomenon in colonizer/“dominant” populations, resulting in the popular notion that, like acculturation, syncretism tends to be a one-way street. Others point out that studies of syncretism tend to characterize the process as an amicable, cordial “making do”—a joining of two or more traditions in harmonious coexistence that often overlooks elements of discord, resistance, conflict, or mockery.

In historical archaeology, where ethnically ambiguous forms of material culture have long been the subject of considerable debate (e.g., the origins of colonowares), scholars have commonly employed the concept of creolization to investigate cultural mixture (Dawdy 2000; Deagan 1983, 1996; Deetz 1996; Ferguson 1992; Loren 2005, 2008; Mouer 1993; Nassaney 2004, 2005). Borrowing its metaphor from linguistics, *creolization* denotes the recombination of shared lexical elements in a new grammar and syntax. In one of the earliest archaeological applications, Ferguson (1992:xlii) suggested that in processes of creolization, “material things are part of the lexicon of culture while the ways they were made, used, [and] perceived are part of the grammar.” In contrast to some of the aforementioned concepts, creolization studies have not relegated culture change exclusively to the realm of the colonized nor to that of the colonizer (Deetz 1996:213; Mouer 1993). Although its use is widespread today, the concept of creolization was coined to describe a very specific type of cultural emergence in which new forms were created out of a common cultural vocabulary (Palmie 2006:434–437).¹ Most frequently, this process has been exemplified through the creation of new types in the Americas based on the recombination of various Old World forms—the development of a distinctive African American culture being the example par excellence (Mintz and Price 1992). In this way, creolization is particularly

appropriate for the examination of diasporic societies and identities, as well as the development of distinct colonial cultures in the Americas by expatriates and their descendants (Dawdy 2000:1; Deagan 1983, 1996; Dawdy 2000:1; see Cusick 2000; Delle 2000; Ewen 2000). Central to the concept of creolization, then, is the factor of dislocation from a cultural homeland.

In colonial New Spain, the term *criollo* was used in reference to people, animals, and plants indigenous to the Old World that were born (or germinated) in the New World. But the term itself did not necessarily carry a connotation either of power or of a lack thereof. Children of *peninsulares* (native-born Spaniards) or enslaved Africans born in the Americas were all known equally as *criollos*. Writing in the sixteenth century, the famous Inca-Spaniard mestizo Garcilasco de la Vega defined *criollos* as “los que ya no eran españoles, ni tampoco indigenas” (those that are no longer Spaniards, but were not Indians, either) (quoted in Stewart 1999:44). Yet considering its emphasis on diasporic populations, creolization is not a suitable concept for the investigation of all types of archaeological mixing. In many Native American contexts, for example, it seems confusing and contradictory to speak of “creolization” within groups that have no immediate connections to the Old World, as is the case with the Pueblos of the seventeenth century that I study.²

Similarly, the concept of *mestizaje* (the mixing of races) has been used to “explain unequal power relations in the Spanish colonial past and the emergence of a national identity that denies colonial racial hierarchy in the present” (Loren 2005:299). Scholars of Spanish colonial history and contemporary Latin American studies frequently speak of a distinctive mestizo culture that developed out of the marriage and interbreeding of Spaniards and Indians in the New World. But again, this concept seems misplaced when applied to Native American contexts in which a distinct indigenous identity was maintained in contrast to a developing *criollo* or mestizo culture, as is the case in colonial New Mexico. While studies of creolization and *mestizaje* have generally avoided some of the pitfalls that have plagued prior theories of cultural mixture, such as passive and unidirectional culture change, like these other concepts, both have at times been used uncritically as a simple gloss for cross-cultural exchange (see also discussions of transculturation, e.g., Ortiz 1947). This tends to negate the inequity and violence—both symbolic and corporeal—inherent in colonial encounters (Mullins and Paynter 2000), causing critics to accuse archaeological studies of these processes of focusing sanguinely on the seemingly benign elements of colonial life (Orser 2006:204–205; Singleton 1998:179).

In an attempt to avoid the terminological baggage associated with some of these more widely employed concepts, others have advocated the adoption of Levi-Strauss’s (1966) concept of *bricolage*, which entails the creative recombination of cultural elements by individuals acting within a limited range of options. While Levi-Strauss’s original formulation conceived of actors working within a single, closed cultural system (Hénaff 1998:144–145), Jean Comaroff (1985) expanded *bricolage* to colonial contexts. In her superb study of Tshidi Zionism, Comaroff examined an intercultural situation that “condemns the dominated to reproduce the material and symbolic forms of a neocolonial system” (1985:261).

In recent years bricolage has been adopted by a few archaeologists as an antidote against the myopic concentration on agency that characterizes much of contemporary archaeology, focusing instead on the limitations that social structures can place on cultural amalgamation. As Fennell (2007:31) notes, "In essence, the interdependence of individual agents and social structures . . . has been replaced by some analysts with a greater focus on individual agency and a disregard of stable structures." Others have found the lack of agency inherent in the notion of bricolage limiting, particularly in decolonized contexts where colonial domination no longer applies (see Liebmann 2002:142).

Hybridity: Good to Think?

What then does the concept of hybridity bring to the table that is not supplied by the plethora of alternatives detailed above? One answer would seem to be a dearth of baggage. As the most recent addition to the archaeological lexicon describing intercultural mixture, hybridity still sports a relatively unsullied veneer. It hasn't yet had time to accrue many of the negative associations among archaeologists that commonly plague the alternatives, such as a lack of agency and unidirectionality. Nonetheless, although at first glance the hybridity approach may appear to be an easy way to sidestep these problems, its proponents should be forewarned: The concept of hybridity carries baggage all its own. At the same time, it also bears subtle connotations that can be valuable in the analysis of cultural amalgamation. But if the term continues to be used unreflexively as a simple gloss for any and all situations involving cultural mixture (as seems to be the trend in recent archaeological scholarship), it risks losing its interpretive purchase, becoming diluted to the point of banality.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines *hybrid* (in part) as "anything derived from heterogeneous sources, or composed of different or incongruous elements." Its origins can be found in the Latin word *hibrida*, denoting the offspring of a tame sow and a wild boar; it was also applied to the child of a free person and a slave. Thus from the beginning, the notion of hybridity was associated with the union of domesticated civilization and wild savagery. The term continued to have a checkered political history through the nineteenth century, when hybrid biological forms were thought to be weak and sterile, providing evidence that pure racial types were superior and not to be mixed (Young 1995:6–19). Over the course of the past century, however, genetic studies demonstrated hybrid species to be particularly fruitful and resilient, imbuing the term with more positive connotations (Stewart 1999:45). In postcolonial theory, hybridity commonly refers to the new transcultural forms produced through colonization that cannot be neatly classified into a single cultural or ethnic category (Liebmann 2008a:83). But this term does not connote benign and innocuous combinations of formerly separate entities. As used by postcolonial scholars, hybridity can imply disruption and a forcing together of unlike things (Young 1995:26), calling attention to disjunctions as well as conjunctions (Kapchan and Strong 1999:249). In the words of Bhabha:

[H]ybridization is not some happy, consensual mix of diverse cultures; it is the strategic, translational transfer of tone, value, signification, and position—a transfer of power—from an authoritative system of cultural hegemony to an emergent process of cultural relocation and reiteration that changes the very terms of interpretation and institutionalization, opening up contesting, opposing, innovative, “other” grounds of subject and object formation. (Bhabha quoted in Seshadri-Crooks 2000:370)

In fact, some postcolonial scholars advocate restricting use of the term exclusively to situations of distinctly unbalanced power relations (Kuortti and Nyman 2007:2), serving to further emphasize the crucial element of power in hybrid cultural formations.

Postcolonial hybridity further differs from the previously mentioned concepts through its stress on the profound ambivalence inherent in colonial situations, emphasizing the simultaneous desire for and repulsion from an object, person, or action (Young 1995:161). Additionally, it implies a reworking of previously existing elements rather than any simple combination of two (or more) distinct cultural forms (Bhabha 1994:110). Hybridity thus foregrounds the issues of power and inequity inherent in colonial societies, underscoring the empowering nature of hybrid forms, which often make space for anticolonial resistance through the challenging of binary categories. This emphasis on power can be traced through Bhabha’s writings back to the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (1982:358–61), whose foundational use of the term *hybridity* stressed the unsettling and transfiguring capacity of these new cultural formations.

In comparison, anthropological concepts such as acculturation, syncretism, creolization, and *mestizaje* have tended to cast cultural mixture in a more accommodating light (Khan 2007:653; Stewart 1999:48). These concepts have also been critiqued for representing cultures as bounded wholes, presuming a preexisting purity in the social formations that are later combined (Stewart 1999:40–41). The postcolonial application of hybridity addresses some of these limitations by emphasizing the fact that *all* cultures are mixtures (a point famously illustrated by Linton [1936] more than seven decades ago) and rejecting the idea that any pure or essential cultures have ever existed (Said 1993:xxv). Hybridity also stresses the interdependence and mutual construction of colonizer and colonized, acknowledging the multidirectional ebb and flow of cultural influences in colonial contexts and encouraging a focus not on synchronic structures but on diachronic practices (Kapchan and Strong 1999:250).

Based on these subtle differences, I think that the concept of hybridity as it has been used in contemporary postcolonial studies has the possibility to offer more than mere semantic variation to the investigation of cultural mixture. While I am leery to embrace yet another neologism in the already jargon-filled lexicon of archaeological theory, I think that hybridity does in fact have something to offer to the investigation of mixed forms of material culture and the study of “how newness enters the world” more generally. Through its explicit foregrounding of power and inequity, hybridity is a valuable theoretical lens that can enhance the investigation of the archaeology of cultural amalgamation.

Maps and Territory: Issues of Classification

But we have to keep in mind that hybridity is just that—a theoretical lens, not an ethnographic object in and of itself—just as acculturation, syncretism, creolization, and all the rest are theoretical lenses as well. As Gregory Bateson noted (1972:454–455), we have to be careful not to confuse the anthropological map with the territory. With this in mind, it might be useful to take a step back and reflect on the fact that the notion of hybridity—and indeed, cultural amalgamation itself—is fundamentally an issue of taxonomy. The classification of things into categories of “pure” versus “mixed” provides the basis for the notion of hybridity. Yet these categories are social constructs, not self-evident and naturally occurring types (Stross 1999:255). In other words, purity is in the eye of the beholder.

Part of the problem we face in attempting to classify material culture as mixed or pure, or according to different types of mixture, stems from our own muddling of the exercise of classification. The frustration for many archaeologists with the use of terms such as *hybridity* is that the addition of another synonym to the list doesn’t necessarily improve our understandings of the past (particularly when the neologism is applied in a haphazard manner). The continued splitting of objects or cultural processes into ever more refined categories—syncretism versus creolization versus bricolage versus hybridity—eventually works against our ability to compare the phenomena of intercultural mixture across space and time. Here it is useful to keep in mind Geertz’s (1973) distinction between models of and models for. As a model that describes historical processes of cultural change (a “model of”), hybridity has not yet achieved its interpretive potential. The lack of consensus concerning what specifically defines hybridity and its continued use as a catchall term for cultural mixture more generally combine to render it toothless. Hybridity becomes an alluring but ultimately infertile notion when promiscuously applied (Holland and Eisenhart 1990:57). However, I would argue that hybridity’s current value can be found in its use as a “model for”—as an analytical tool that helps interpret, rather than describe, mixed material culture. That is, hybridity is a concept that is “good to think” (Levi-Strauss 1963:89). We can use the notion of postcolonial hybridity to see instances of cultural mixture in a new light, allowing us to explore the complexities and nuances of mixed material culture in new ways. To illustrate this point, I’ll now shine the differing lights of hybridity, acculturation, syncretism, and bricolage on two archaeological examples from seventeenth-century New Mexico (Figure 2-1).

The Chalice and the Kachina

The first case I’d like to consider is a clear example of Spanish-Pueblo fusion, a stemmed ceramic chalice (Figure 2-2) that was found at the ancestral Jemez pueblo of Giusewa. The chalice is the vessel form used to hold the wine that becomes the blood of Christ in the celebration of the Catholic ritual of Eucharist. This particular chalice is an example of the indigenous Puebloan pottery style

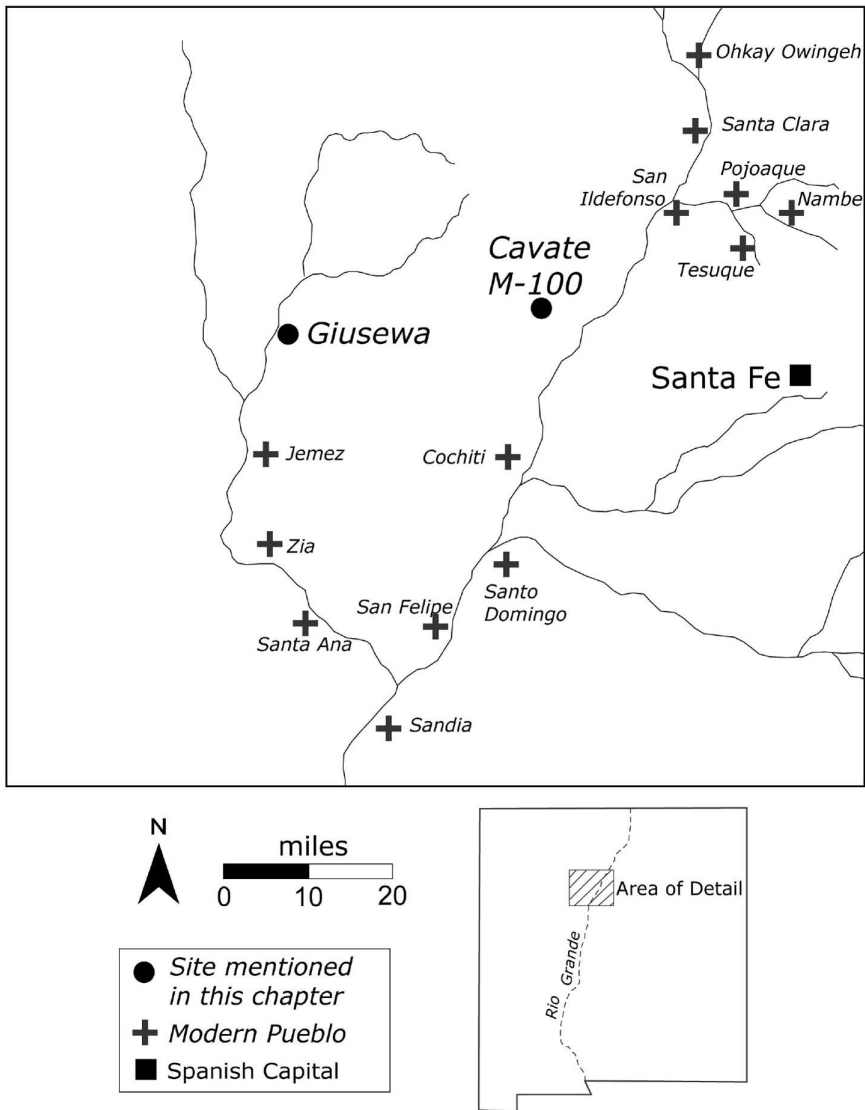


Figure 2-1. Locations of sites discussed in this chapter.

known as Jemez Black-on-white, a ceramic type that was manufactured from A.D. 1325 to 1680 in the Jemez province of northern New Mexico (Elliott 1994; Liebmann 2006, 2008b). The chalice was excavated in 1937 during archaeological investigations of the *convento* complex (priests' quarters) of an early seventeenth-century Franciscan mission at Giusewa (Reiter 1938:82; Toulouse 1937). Unfortunately, no details beyond the general location of its discovery are known, due to the absence of comprehensive excavation notes or records.

The Pueblo village at which the chalice was found was established in the late A.D. 1400s and thrived for over a century prior to Spanish colonization. Giusewa



Figure 2-2. Jemez Black-on-white chalice (18531/11) excavated at Giusewa (LA 679). (Photograph by David McNeece, courtesy of the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology, Museum of New Mexico.)

was inhabited by Towa-speaking Pueblo people who identified themselves as ethnically *Hemish* (later transliterated as Jemez) to the Europeans they first encountered in 1541 (Hammond and Rey 1940:244). In September of 1598, a Franciscan priest established the first mission at Giusewa, and for the next 40 years the Spanish presence at the pueblo waxed and waned because of the rebellion and apostasy of its Jemez inhabitants (Liebmann 2006:147–151). By the late 1650s, the area was reported to be “*despoblado*” (uninhabited) (Scholes 1938:96) with its former residents resettled at a different mission village, their numbers thinned considerably as a result of epidemic diseases introduced by the Spaniards.

The chalice was found among the ruins of the original convento complex, which was constructed and occupied by Fray Alonso de Lugo between 1598 and

1601 (Ivey 1991:131). This vessel can be securely dated to between 1598 and 1659, with the intrasite context suggesting that it is likely to have been manufactured, used, and discarded between 1598 and 1601. The fact that it was made in the Jemez Black-on-white style is not entirely surprising, as this pottery dominates the decorated ware assemblage at Giusewa (and indeed, all ancestral Jemez villages occupied between the late fourteenth century and 1680). Jemez Black-on-white comprises 94 percent of the decorated ceramic assemblage at Giusewa, spanning both the pre-Hispanic and early Colonial periods (Elliott 1991:80). The fusion of Christian form with a traditional Jemez ceramic type suggests that the artifact was commissioned by a friar (probably Fray Alonso himself), and manufactured by one of the women at Giusewa. The mixing of the two traditions is further evident in the decoration of the chalice, which combines the Pueblo convention of concentric lines encircling the upper register of the inside of the bowl with the Christian crosses that adorn the bottom of the bowl interior and the underside of the base.

The Virgin Kachina

The second example of seventeenth-century Pueblo-Spanish fusion I'd like to consider comes from the *cavates* (rooms carved into stone cliffs) of Frijoles Canyon, located in what is known today as Bandelier National Monument (see Figure 2-1). Sometime following Spanish contact, a small group of people reoccupied the cavates in a remote and inaccessible area of the canyon known to archaeologists as Group M (Hendron 1943:ii–iv). Associated ceramics suggest that this reoccupation took place during the late seventeenth century, probably during the tumultuous Pueblo Revolt–Spanish reconquest era of 1680–1700 (Liebmann 2002; Turney 1948:70). During that time the refugees carved figures into the plaster of a cavate room known as M-100.³ In addition to images of masked kachina figures and a traditional striped *koshare* (clown), this cavate contains one particularly curious figure that stands out from all the rest, bearing clear evidence of European influence (Figure 2-3). Incised into the plaster of the west wall of M-100, just above the remains of two metate bins, this icon displays European-style facial features (the eyes, eyebrows, and nose), as well as a halo or crown and a line encircling the face that may represent a veil, strongly resembling Spanish colonial depictions of Santa Maria (Figure 2-4).

However, this is not a straightforward Catholic icon, either. Comparisons with kachina representations in rock art suggest that this seemingly Christian symbol has been infused with traditional Puebloan characteristics as well. Although the crown or halo may be illustrative of Spanish influence, similar points are also found adorning kachina masks, particularly in depictions of the sun kachina (Liebmann 2002:140; Schaafsma 1975:77) (see Figure 2-4). Furthermore, the concentric circle surrounding the face is a stylistic element found in both traditional Pueblo art and in Spanish colonial depictions of the Virgin. Finally, while the eyes and nose of this image are undoubtedly in the European style, the mouth is represented by a rectangle—a characteristic of kachina masks throughout the Pueblo world.

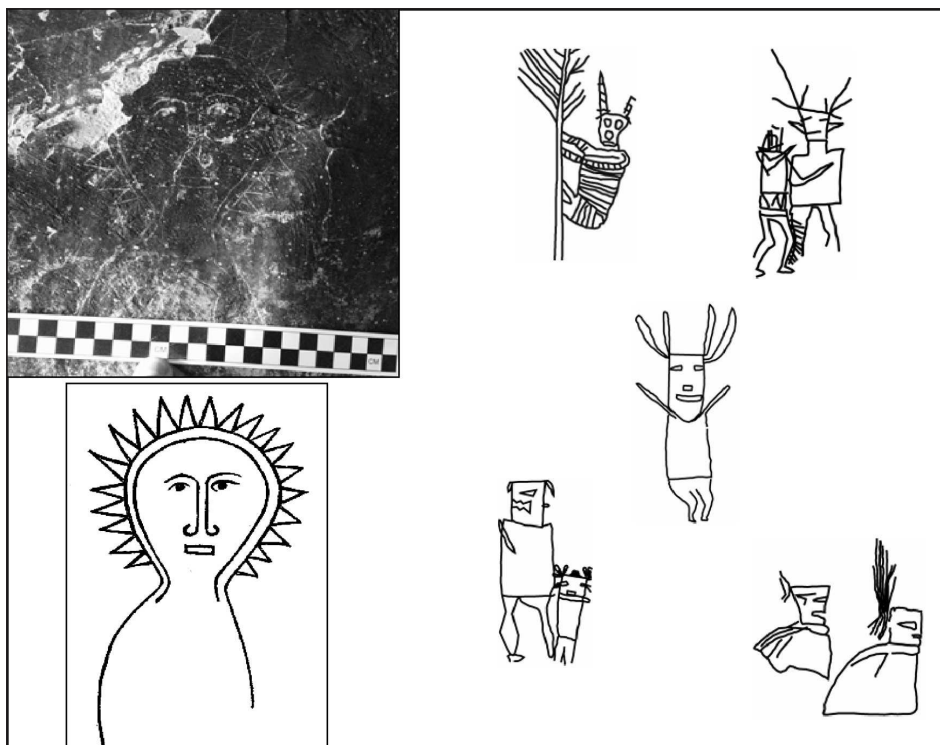


Figure 2-3. *Figures incised in plaster of cavate M-100, Frijoles Canyon; Virgin kachina (left), with the traditional Pueblo religious imagery that surrounds it (right).*

Assuming for the moment that the temporal identification I've made for this figure is correct, the appearance of a combined Pueblo-Catholic image during this era is particularly intriguing. The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 was inspired by a nativist and revivalist agenda propagated by the leaders of the uprising (Liebmann 2006, 2008b; Liebmann and Preucel 2007). Following the revolt, these leaders encouraged the Pueblo peoples to purge their world of Spanish influence, particularly the remnants of Catholicism. The Puebloans sacked and destroyed mission facilities throughout New Mexico, executed priests and colonial settlers, and were reportedly prohibited even from uttering the names of Jesus Christ and Santa Maria. Violation of these prohibitions carried the sanction of death (Hackett and Shelby 1942, 2:233–253). Thus the production of a seemingly Christian-inspired image under these overtly nativist conditions begs further explication.

How then are we to make sense of these artifacts? Are they best understood as examples of acculturation? Syncretism? Bricolage? Creolization? *Mestizaje*? Or hybridity? Does it make a difference whether we choose one of these labels over another, or are all equally adequate? In what follows, I consider the different pictures of the past that result when we interpret these instances of Pueblo-Spanish fusion through the varied theoretical lenses of cultural mixture.

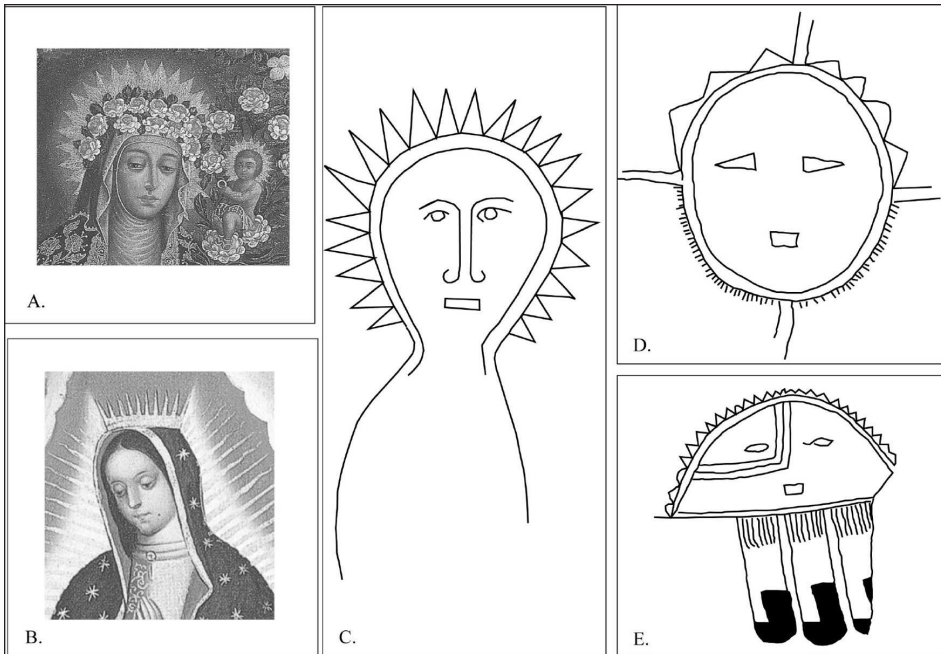


Figure 2-4. (A) *Santa Rosa de Lima*, detail; (B) *Virgin of Guadalupe*, detail; (C) *cavate M-100 Maria kachina figure*; (D) *petroglyph, Cochiti Reservoir District* (after Schaafsma 1975:77); (E) *Jeddito Spattered sherd design* (after Hays 1994:58).

Acculturation

Examining the chalice as an example of acculturation immediately begs the question: Who is acculturating to whom? Does the manufacture of a Jemez Black-on-white vessel in this conspicuously foreign form document the adoption of Spanish culture by the people of Giusewa? Or does it represent a transformation on the part of the Franciscan priest who used it, as he became acculturated to life in the pueblo? Traditionally, acculturation studies have viewed objects such as this as markers of the adoption of European culture by Native Americans, documenting the “incorporation of outside ideas or technology within a generally persistent way of life” (Cusick 1998:128). According to this line of thought, we could view the chalice as an emblem of the acceptance of Christianity by the Jemez, with the technology of its production representing the continuity of Pueblo culture. However, to say that the mere presence of a chalice (or an entire mission church, for that matter) represents the acceptance of a new religion by the Jemez significantly overstates the case. Although the chalice was most likely produced by Jemez artisans, it was almost surely manufactured *for* a Spanish friar; because the chalice would have been used primarily (if not exclusively) by the priest himself, its ability to address acculturation on the indigenous side

of the colonial equation is limited at best. Similarly, the notion that the chalice represents the acculturation of the priest is probably misleading; chalices have long been constructed from a variety of local materials (whether ceramic, metal, wood, or otherwise), so the fact that this particular cup happens to be made of Jemez Black-on-white speaks more to the locale of its production than to any change in the theology or cosmology of the Spanish friar who commissioned it.

Alternatively, in the case of the cavate figure, we could apply the concept of acculturation in a rudimentary, quantitative manner in an attempt to calculate the degree of assimilation of the Pueblo people who occupied that cavate. (Personally I don't find such analyses particularly enlightening. Here I carry out the exercise only to demonstrate one way in which acculturation has been applied to material culture in the past.) Out of the six total anthropomorphic figures that adorn the walls of cavate M-100, five are traditional Puebloan characters while only one displays European elements. Thus it could be argued that the people who lived in this cavate in the late seventeenth century were still 83 percent "traditional" and just 17 percent "acculturated." Clearly this is an artificial and misleadingly precise calculation that may or may not bear any resemblance to the actual historical conditions of M-100's occupation. It also overlooks the traditional Puebloan elements in the "European" figure, assuming it to be a straightforward indicator of Christian belief (a supposition I believe the context argues against, as I articulate below). In any case, the presence of European characteristics does document a modicum of acceptance or, at the very least, incorporation of formerly foreign concepts and artistic techniques into Pueblo life, serving as the most basic indicator of "acculturation"—but only if used in the straightforward sense of those changes that result from direct contact between social groups with previously disparate histories (after Redfield et al. 1936:149), a definition so broad as to be nearly devoid of any interpretive insight.

Alternatively, these artifacts could be seen as markers of the various stages of Pueblo acculturation to Spanish social formations, with the chalice documenting the opening salvo in the battle for Jemez souls. As an artifact produced for and used primarily by the Spaniards, its ability to speak to the transformation of Jemez culture is limited, but the fact that the chalice is constructed in a traditional Jemez ceramic style does attest to the notion that Christianity had a foot in the door at Giusewa. The Virgin kachina figure, on the other hand, could be seen to represent a more advanced stage of acculturation, with Pueblo peoples here adopting elements of Christianity in a context wholly independent of direct Spanish control. Viewed in this light, the cavate figure documents an intermediate stage in the assimilation of the Pueblos, in which the artist (and the intended audience) has begun to accommodate some elements of Catholic doctrine, but without giving up his or her foundation in traditional Pueblo culture.

Ultimately, the exercise of viewing the chalice and the cavate figure through the lens of acculturation yields limited results for improving our understandings of intercultural interactions during the seventeenth century in New Mexico. The basic problem is that material things do not represent the thought world in a simple one-to-one correlation; a change in material culture does not necessarily equate a change in cultural orientation or ideology (and vice versa; see Hodge

2005; Silliman 2009). Thus the fundamental goal of acculturation studies—the measurement of the degree of change in a given society—is difficult to realize, particularly when material culture is the medium through which change is being measured. For this reason, I find acculturation to be fundamentally dissatisfying for archaeological analyses. Fortunately, some of the alternative theoretical perspectives provide more useful fodder for the analysis of Pueblo-Spanish interactions in the seventeenth century.

Syncretism and Bricolage

While acculturation studies have historically focused on gauging the extent of change in a particular social group, analyses employing syncretism and bricolage are typically less concerned with measurement and quantification and more concerned with documentation of the emergence of new cultural formations. The concepts of syncretism and (colonial) bricolage both concentrate attention on the novel types that develop out of the combination of previously discrete forms, rather than on a transition from “Native” to “Euro-American” or vice versa. For example, viewed through the lens of either syncretism or bricolage, both the chalice and the Virgin kachina figure could be seen to represent the development of a uniquely Puebloan form of Catholicism. In contrast to acculturation, both syncretism and bricolage focus on the development of a new, third form, rather than a transformation from one existing “culture” to another.

Where syncretism and bricolage differ is in their emphasis on agency and structure, respectively. By characterizing either the chalice or the cavate figure as evidence of syncretism, we emphasize the creativity employed by active agents in the creation of these new types, stressing inventiveness and innovation. Studies of syncretism tend to be essentially optimistic about cultural mixture,⁴ viewing the creation of new syncretic forms as a constructive solution to the navigation of two (or more) seemingly opposed systems of belief. Bricolage, on the other hand, carries a slightly less optimistic tone, emphasizing the limitations that structures can place on people forced to negotiate between different cultural traditions. Seen in this light, the Pueblo makers of the chalice and the Virgin kachina figure were condemned to reproduce the signs of the colonizer, and these new forms are evidence of people forced to “make do” within a limited array of options.

Yet while the emphasis on the creation of new forms supplied by both syncretism and bricolage is a welcome move away from the one-dimensional characterization of intercultural transfer offered by acculturation, there can be problems with each of these theoretical frameworks as well. The rose-colored lens of syncretism overlooks the power differentials inherent in the creation of these artifacts and as a result ignores both the reality of colonial domination and the possibility of resistance in their creation. Bricolage, while making room for investigations of repression and power, pays insufficient attention to intentionality and the historical contexts of production surrounding these artifacts. While the notion that an isolated friar was simply “making do” when he commissioned the Jemez Black-on-white chalice might be appropriate, the creator of the Virgin kachina was pointedly not living under the weight of the colonial yoke when

this figure was created. Viewing the inhabitants of cavate M-100 as persons “condemned to reproduce the symbols of the colonial system” reinforces the construction of indigenous peoples as the Other, characterizing them as dupes and victims of false consciousness who lack the ability to think for themselves.

Creolization and Mestizaje

Like syncretism and bricolage, both creolization and *mestizaje* highlight the creation of new cultural forms that result from the colonial encounter. But these analytical categories differ from syncretism and bricolage by focusing attention not on changes to native culture but on the Spanish side of the colonial equation (in the case of creolization) or by suggesting the development of a unique colonial culture (in the case of *mestizaje*).

Creolization, as noted above, is defined by the creation of new forms out of a common cultural vocabulary in a situation of dislocation or diaspora. And while this concept has been stretched in recent years to apply to virtually any situation in the contemporary globalized world (Palmie 2006:434), I advocate restricting its use to situations more akin to this original context. In general it seems confusing, if not altogether incorrect, to speak of creolization among those Native Americans who were not significantly displaced by colonization, living in the same general locales for multiple generations before and after colonization (such as is the case with Giusewa and the cavates of Frijoles Canyon), and who had no immediate ties to Europe (as implied by the term *criollo*). Thus the concept of creolization seems to me not entirely appropriate for the analysis of seventeenth-century Pueblo culture. The concept of creolization has, however, proven useful for analyzing the formation of a distinctive Spanish American colonial culture (Deagan 1983, 1996; Loren 2008). In this light, the chalice could be considered an artifact of creolization, with the friar who commissioned its production drawing on the cultural vocabulary of Iberian Catholicism (manifested in the form of the vessel) to create a distinctive example of the new Spanish American culture that was being forged in early seventeenth-century New Mexico.

Similarly, *mestizaje* emphasizes the creation of new cultural formations and identities out of the union of Old World and New World peoples in the Spanish colonies. In the case of seventeenth-century New Mexico, the concept could be applied to investigate the novel creation of a distinct Northern Rio Grande culture that combined elements of Spanish, Pueblo, and Athabaskan (Apache and Navajo) social formations. But again, this concept seems slightly misplaced when applied to the analysis of Pueblo peoples, who maintained distinctive ethnic identities in contrast to the colonial Spaniards, Mexican Indians, enslaved and freed Africans, *Genizaros*, and other native peoples surrounding them throughout the seventeenth century (and down to the present day). Thus to apply *mestizaje* to the cavate figure blurs the line between Native American and Spanish American cultures in ways that homogenize the on-the-ground realities of seventeenth-century ethnicity in New Mexico. Likewise, while the chalice could be construed as a material example of the newly developing Northern Rio Grande culture, this again seems to misrepresent the scale of cultural mixture during this period in

northern New Spain. Simply put, although New Mexico is often referred to as a “unique cultural mosaic,” it is not today, nor was it 400 years ago, a melting pot. *Mestizaje* implies the development of a single, unitary culture, but the fact remains that in the seventeenth century there were many different social groups, distinct ethnic identities, and dissimilar cultural formations among the peoples living in New Mexico.

Hybridity

Finally, then, we come to hybridity. As noted above, hybridity can differ from the aforementioned concepts through an emphasis on resistance, mockery, and ambivalence. Whereas syncretism, creolization, and *mestizaje* celebrate the creative, generative energy of cultural mixture, hybridity shines a light on the subversive, counterhegemonic discourses inherent in mixed forms. At the same time, while colonial bricolage envisions colonized citizens as hapless victims condemned to reinscribe their own subjugation, hybridity emphasizes the agency of subalterns; in the words of Bhabha (1985:162), “hybridity mimics and mocks what it sees; it doesn’t only reflect it.”

Viewed in this light, the Virgin kachina figure can be seen as an example of conscious hybridity that subverts Spanish colonial power. Because it is found in a context surrounded by traditional kachina imagery (and not by any additional Christian iconography), I argue that this figure is an example of the “Pueblofication” of Santa Maria, wherein the Virgin was made into a hybrid kachina in an example of Pueblo appropriation of Spanish colonial power (Liebmann 2002). This type of intentional hybridity is very different from syncretism or bricolage. Rather than emphasizing a symbiotic merger of cultural formations, conscious hybrids set elements of different cultures against each other in a conflictual structure, creating a dialectic space of contestation. The Virgin kachina documents the transgressive power of hybridity, jarringly bringing elements of Christianity together with Pueblo religion. It could be argued that in this case, the Virgin is being hijacked from the Spaniards to be brought into the Pueblo pantheon. This type of hybridity illustrates the limits of colonial dominance, where the discourse of colonial authority loses its unequivocal grasp and finds itself open to the interpretation of the colonized Other (Bhabha 1994:154–156). Furthermore, it illustrates the profound ambivalence generated in colonized peoples, the simultaneous appeal of and aversion to colonialism that has often been overlooked in romanticized accounts of anticolonial resistance (Abu-Lughod 1990).

Shining the light of hybridity onto the chalice emphasizes the variety of ways this artifact may have been viewed by different people at Giusewa. While the friar and converted members of the congregation may indeed have seen the chalice as something more akin to our notions of syncretism, bricolage, or even acculturation, to others it may have represented something entirely different. Viewed through the lens of hybridity, the chalice becomes an object of ambivalence and mockery. The Jemez who were more hostile to Catholic evangelism may have seen the chalice as a sign of their newfound subjugation—an index of their pre-Hispanic freedom (embodied in the traditional pottery type) now lost

to new forms of colonial repression. In the chalice, traditional Jemez culture is forced to bend to the Christian mold, a material embodiment of the Spanish colonial experience for the inhabitants of Giusewa. To others the chalice may have been an instrument of hybrid mockery, turning the tables on the friar through his use of a traditional type in a decidedly nontraditional manner—in a sense, forcing the Spaniard to bend to the will of the Jemez. Personally, I am not convinced that either of these interpretations is the best of the alternatives presented here for understanding the meanings embedded in and evoked by the chalice; nonetheless, the notion of postcolonial hybridity does provide novel perspectives on this object, challenging us to think through a range of new interpretive possibilities.

As I hope these examples demonstrate, the concept of hybridity can in fact be useful for theorizing the ambiguous cultural formations that appear under colonialism, where the existence of both change through domination, and resistance to such change often occur at the same time (Werbner 1997:5). While postcolonial hybridity is not appropriate for the investigation of all instances of cultural amalgamation, it does provide a valuable lens through which we can reexamine some of our previous assumptions regarding colonial mixture. In doing so, hybridity forces us to see both “pure” and “impure” objects in new ways, ultimately providing us with a more nuanced and detailed picture of colonial pasts.

Conclusion

In many ways, the introduction of hybridity into archaeological investigations of colonialism reiterates the contributions of previous examinations of cultural mixture. Like acculturation, hybridity stresses the pervasive power of colonial structures and highlights the disruptions imposed on indigenous social groups. The twin concepts of syncretism and bricolage overlap with Bakhtin’s (1982) notions of conscious and organic hybridity. And studies of creolization have previously emphasized the creativity inherent in cultural mixture, ascribing agency to people and social groups on multiple sides of the colonial encounter. Yet postcolonial concepts of hybridity do subtly offer a new emphasis to studies of colonial mixture. By foregrounding the dynamics of power inherent in amalgamated cultural formations, hybridity has the ability to investigate the pervasive and invasive extents of colonial domination as well as the transfigurative power and ambivalence manifested in hybrid transcripts of resistance.

Table 2-1 lists the interpretive concepts reviewed in this chapter, along with simplified versions of the interpretations each offers concerning the material culture of seventeenth-century Pueblo-Spanish amalgamation. As this table demonstrates, hybridity is in fact something more than a new, trendy-sounding bit of jargon. It has the ability to generate novel analytical insights about objects we have long been accustomed to consider in other terms; it can also render more adequate descriptions of cultural configurations we are only beginning to examine.

But if archaeologists continue to deploy the term *hybridity* in haphazard and unreflexive manners, the term will surely lose its interpretive power. To use hybridity as a catchall for cultural mixture is to defang it, rendering it toothless

Table 2-1. *Definitions of Synonyms for Cultural Mixture and Resulting Interpretations*

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition/Characteristics</i>	<i>Definition/Characteristics</i>
Acculturation	Measuring transition from one cultural pattern to another; stage in assimilation	Evidence of the Pueblos becoming more Spanish/Catholic and less “traditional”
Syncretism	Emphasis on religion; active creation of new forms; positive connotations	Evidence of active, intentional creation of new type of Pueblo-Catholicism by the Jemez
Bricolage	Emphasis on determining structures; forced production of new forms	Evidence that the Jemez were compelled to produce new type of Pueblo-Catholicism
Creolization	Creation of new forms out of common cultural vocabulary in situations of forced relocation or diaspora	Evidence for the creation of a distinctive Spanish-American Catholicism by the friars
Mestizaje	Novel creation of a unique culture that denies colonial racial hierarchy	Evidence for the creation of new “Northern Rio Grande culture” that combines elements of Spanish, Native American, and North African cultures
Hybridity	Stresses ambivalence, mockery, resistance, and agency; emphasizes disjuncture and forcing together of unlike things	Evidence of resistance, subversion, and ambivalence on the part of the Pueblos towards the Spaniards

and weak. In short, the creative, generative energy of syncretism is not the same thing as the subversive, counterhegemonic power of postcolonial hybridity; and as Khan (2007:654) notes, “treating it as the same clouds our understanding of the dynamics of culture, power, and change.” Because hybridity is often most apparent in the shared and transformed elements of material culture, archaeological studies of colonial hybridity stand uniquely qualified to contribute to postcolonial theory, providing a concrete basis for the questioning of what appears natural, complete, authentic, traditional, and pure in the social and cultural formations that developed in the wake of the European invasion of the Americas.

Notes

1. This is not to suggest that there is any unitary definition of creolization agreed on by all archaeologists (Ferguson 2000:5). Dawdy (2000:1) identifies three commonly utilized definitions: (1) the recombination of new elements within a

conservative cultural grammar; (2) adaptation and development of a distinct colonial culture that does not *necessarily* result from ethnic and racial mixing; and (3) the blending of genetic and cultural traits within a plural population (emphasis in original).

2. However, the concept of creolization may be applicable to some cases of native ethnogenesis generated through colonization and dislocation, such as that of the Seminoles (Sturtevant 1971) and Genizaros in New Mexico (Ebright and Hendricks 2006).

3. As with all rock art (or more correctly in this case “plaster art”), dating these figures is a challenge. The *terminus post quem* for this cavate art is supplied by the image of a horse incised into the same [outermost] layer of plaster as the images in question, indicating a date after 1539.

As for the *terminus ante quem*, I argue that these images were drawn *during* the late seventeenth-century occupation of the cavate—and not after its abandonment—based on their location on the walls. The figures in question are all located in a band 30 to 70 cm above the floor (i.e., at eye level for a person sitting or kneeling). By contrast, the post-seventeenth-century etchings, including modern graffiti and images drawn by itinerant Hispanic shepherds, tend to be located 120 cm above the floor or higher (i.e., in the field of vision of a person standing in the cavate). During the seventeenth-century occupation, people carved images at the lower level because they tended to sit or kneel in this room. After abandonment, visitors to the cavate tended to leave their marks while standing because they were not living in the room (and thus not kneeling or sitting).

4. Such studies tend to be essentially optimistic about cultural mixture, that is, when syncretism is not viewed as transgressive or heretical, as is often the view of practitioners of religious fundamentalism.

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